

REPORT ON THE WATERS OF NORTH CAROLINA,  
WITH REFERENCE TO THE CULTIVATION  
OF OYSTERS, TOGETHER WITH THE RE-  
SULTS OF THE SURVEY OF THE  
OYSTER BEDS.

THE AREA EXAMINED.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The waters subject to the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina consist mainly of twelve Sounds, extending and connected with each other along the coast from the Virginia line, in Lat.  $36^{\circ} 33' N.$  to the Cape Fear River, in Lat.  $34^{\circ} 53' N.$  In the order in which they occur from north to south they are Currituck, Albemarle, Croatan, Roanoke, Pamlico, Core, Bogue, Stump, Topsail, Middle, Masonboro and Myrtle Sounds. Between Bogue and Stump Sounds are four estuaries, known as Bogue, Bear, Brown and New Inlets. Between Core and Bogue Sounds is another estuary, forming the harbor of Beaufort, and the Cape Fear River expands at its mouth so as to form another. The difference in latitude, over two and one-half degrees, between the most northerly and southerly of these sounds indicates considerable climatic difference; but the area upon which oysters can live is considerably within the northern extreme, and the climate, consequently, so far as it affects molluscan life, may be considered uniform. Currituck and Albemarle Sounds are excluded from consideration, as they are practically of fresh water. Albemarle Sound, however, receiving as it does the waters of several large rivers and containing within its own limits 5,631,400,000 tons of fresh water, whose only outlet is Pamlico Sound, exercises an important influence upon all forms of life in the latter body; and occasions will arise in the future as in the past, when that influence will be so great as to be destructive to the organisms existing about the head of the Sound.